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MOUNTAIN BROOK COMMUNITY CHURCH

## **What is Advent?**

Advent is a season designed to help us long for God's coming. We read of the ancient hopes of God's people and hope for our own fresh taste of His presence in our lives. Advent readies us for the celebration of Christmas – the wonder of God-becoming-flesh.

We must remember the miracle that Christ came, but also the miracle that Christ comes. That He comes in the midst of the darkness and despair. That He comes into our world and into our lives.

Christ came. Christ comes. Christ will come again.

All three “comings” are to be remembered, longed for, and anticipated at Advent.

The reading guide in your hands is intended to help you as you wait and hope this season. May your observance be blessed.

- MBCC Pastors

## How Do I Use this Advent Devotional?

There are three ways to use this Advent Devotional with family and friends.

**1. Every Sunday**, read the weekly devotional aloud and reflect on the weekly question by journaling and talking with others. The weekly devotional will anchor you in this week's theme and prepare you for the daily Scripture readings.

**2. Every day**, read the daily Scripture readings aloud and reflect on the daily questions. The daily Scripture readings will help you focus on the Person and work of Jesus Christ our Lord.

**3. Throughout the week**, listen to the suggested worship songs to go along with the Scripture reading. The suggested worship songs will help you meditate on Scripture and assist in family worship.

*To help you worship through Advent, don't forget to check out the MBCC Advent playlist available on Spotify!*

# H O P E

## Daily Reading

- s** Isaiah 2:1-5
- m** Psalm 126
- t** 1 Corinthians 15:50-58
- w** 1 Corinthians 1:3-9
- r** 1 Thessalonians 3:11-13
- f** Matthew 24:36-44
- s** Luke 21:25-36

## Songs

- O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*
- Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus*
- God Made Low - Sovereign Grace Music*
- King of Kings - Hillsong*
- O Little Town of Bethlehem*

## week 1

*Beginning Nov. 28*

For many people, HOPE is a desire or a wish that things will somehow get better. We live in a broken world full of sickness and disease, war and terrorism, broken relationships and broken homes...death - sometimes it feels like HOPE is a rare commodity, or maybe just a dream.

For the people of God, HOPE is more than just a desire or a dream. It is the confident expectation that God Himself will one day set all things right, that He will restore all things completely. This restoration is made possible by the Advent of Jesus Christ, our Everlasting King.

The word Advent means “coming” or “arrival.” When we use this word at Christmas time, it reminds us of the anticipation, expectation, and HOPE held over hundreds of years by the people of Israel as they waited for the coming of their Messiah and promised King.

As we light the first Advent candle, representing HOPE, we are reminded that just as the people of God long ago hoped for the coming of the Messiah, “the light that was coming into the world,” today, we also HOPE and long for His second coming. The Advent season is a season that grounds us in the HOPE that only comes through Christ.

### **Weekly Question**

What hope does Jesus give?  
How can we share the hope of Jesus with others this week?

### **Daily Questions**

1. What does this passage teach me about God or the Gospel?
2. What in the passage helps me trust and love God?
3. Are there any commands in this story to obey? How are they for God’s glory and my good? Are there any promises in this story to remember?

# P E A C E

## Daily Reading

- S** Isaiah 11:1-10
- M** Psalm 25:1-10
- T** Romans 15:4-13
- W** 2 Peter 3:8-15
- R** Luke 19:1-10
- F** Matthew 3:1-12
- S** John 1:1-5

## Songs

- Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*
- Peace, Peace* - Sara Groves
- Glory (Let There Be Peace)* - Matt Maher
- Shalom* - Ten Thousand Fathers
- God With Us* - All Sons & Daughters

## **week 2**

*Beginning Dec. 5*

To be human is to long for PEACE. In Scripture, PEACE is not simply the absence of conflict. It is a word that describes completeness, wholeness, fullness, the way things are supposed to be. God created all things to be at PEACE.

Yet, PEACE is not a word that describes our world today. Sin disrupts the PEACE that God desires for His people and His world, a world full of conflict and broken lives. Mankind's only hope for true PEACE is the coming of Jesus Christ.

The second Advent candle represents PEACE, the PEACE that comes into the world through Jesus Christ.

When Christ came, when He was born as a human, He came to bring PEACE. PEACE with God accomplished by His death, burial, and resurrection. He offers this PEACE to any who will trust in Him alone. And He promises that one day, He will come again to bring a complete and lasting PEACE. The Advent season reminds us of our secure hope for PEACE through the gospel of Jesus Christ.

### **Weekly Question**

How can we experience peace by trusting God?

### **Daily Questions**

1. What does this passage teach me about God or the Gospel?
2. What in the passage helps me trust and love God?
3. Are there any commands in this story to obey? How are they for God's glory and my good? Are there any promises in this story to remember?

# J O Y

## Daily Reading

- S** Isaiah 61:1-4; 10-11
- m** Psalm 80:1-7
- t** James 5:7-11
- W** 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24
- r** Philippians 4:4-7
- f** Matthew 11:2-11
- S** John 3:16-21

## Songs

- Joy to the World! The Lord is Come*
- Joyful Joyful We Adore Thee*
- O Come, All Ye Faithful*
- Joy Has Dawned - Keith Getty and Stuart Townend*
- Angels We Have Heard on High*

## week 3

*Beginning Dec. 12*

On the night of our Savior's birth, the angel said, "Fear not, for behold, I bring to you good tidings of great JOY which shall be to all the people." The announcement of Christ's birth was the announcement that true JOY had entered into the world.

True JOY is much more than just a happy feeling that comes and goes. It is an eternal perspective. It is gratefully celebrating what God has provided for His people - peace through His Son. Our JOY is expressed by our praise.

Christ's coming brought great JOY to Mary, Joseph, the shepherds, Anna, Simeon, the wise men, and many others at the time of His birth, just as His coming still brings great JOY to us now. When we see Christ, when we are in His presence, we can experience the fullness of JOY because we know that He has come to save us, and that when He comes again, we, as the people of God, will experience a lasting and uninterrupted JOY, praising His glorious name forever.

### **Weekly Question**

What things bring you joy? How can we spread joy to others?

### **Daily Questions**

1. What does this passage teach me about God or the Gospel?
2. What in the passage helps me trust and love God?
3. Are there any commands in this story to obey? How are they for God's glory and my good? Are there any promises in this story to remember?

# L O V E

## Daily Reading

- s** Matthew 1:18-25
- m** Isaiah 40:6-11
- t** Luke 1:26-38
- w** Psalm 150
- r** Luke 2:1-10
- f** Isaiah 9:1-7
- s** Luke 2:11-14

## Songs

- Labor of Love* - Andrew Peterson
- What Child is This*
- O Holy Night*
- All Glory Be to Christ* - Kings (MHM)
- Go, Tell It on the Mountain*

## **week 4**

*Beginning Dec. 19*

The fourth advent candle represents LOVE. One of the great wonders of the universe is the fact that God loves us, even though we don't deserve it. Throughout Scripture, we see promise after promise that God loves His people with an unending, never-ending, steadfast LOVE. His ultimate expression of this LOVE is through His Son, our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Because of God's LOVE for us, He sent Jesus, our Savior, to be born as a human.

Because of God's LOVE for us, Jesus, our Savior, grew up to die as a sacrifice for our sins. He makes possible the forgiveness of our sins, so we can have peace with God.

Because of God's LOVE for us, Jesus, our Savior, did not stay dead, but was resurrected. He makes it possible for us to receive eternal life, so we can experience fullness of joy as we live with Him forever. We receive all of this by faith alone, in Christ alone.

With the coming of Christ, God communicates His LOVE in a tangible way. "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us." The Advent season reminds us of God's great LOVE.

### **Weekly Question**

What are the ways God shows his love to us daily?

Make a list of the ways God has shown his love to you and add to it daily this week.

### **Daily Questions**

1. What does this passage teach me about God or the Gospel?
2. What in the passage helps me trust and love God?
3. Are there any commands in this story to obey? How are they for God's glory and my good? Are there any promises in this story to remember?

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